

New Year's Resolutions

- Safety & Health Attitudes and Actions -

So, you made it to another year. You are still alive (obviously) and, presumably, at least somewhat healthy. Will you still be able to say this when 2006 rolls around? While you cannot answer this question yet, you can begin by taking steps today to increase the likelihood you will be able to greet 2006 in at least as good a shape as you are today. What action should you take?

Begin with the realization that most premature deaths in this country are not work related. They are caused by your own personal habits as smoking, drug/alcohol abuse, or poor eating habits, usually a high fat diet. Cigarettes coupled with air contaminants can be more harmful to you than just cigarettes alone. Being overweight can make you more susceptible to a back injury. Drug and alcohol abuse not only causes health problems, it is a concern to your employer because of the judgment and coordination problems it can cause. Evaluate your personal habits and limit your excesses.

More disabling injuries occur at home rather than at work. Why is this? Answer these questions for yourself: Do you apply the same safety precautions at home as you do at work? Are your home tools in good repair and properly guarded? Is your ladder of good quality and in good repair? If you are working with hazardous materials, do you wear personal protective equipment? When you are at work, you are expected, if not required, to follow the safety rules. At home, you call the shots. You will be much better off at home by following the same safety rules and procedures you use at work.

So now, hopefully, you have decided to make your life healthier and safer at home. What can you do this year to make yourself safer at work? It all begins with attitude. Working the safe way is the only way. Injuries are not a natural outcome of working. Injuries are the result of something going wrong. Accidents do not just happen; they are caused. Keeping this in mind, be alert to the dangers of your job. Anticipate hazards and eliminate or control them before they cause harm to yourself or others. Learn as much as you can about the dangers of your work and pass that experience onto others. Cooperate with the safety efforts your company is making.